

## Data Description for Davis Pond Alligator Nest Survey

### General:

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries conducts an annual alligator nest survey in June and July. A team of two biologists flies along specified transects as passengers in a Bell 206B Jet Ranger Helicopter, flying at 60 mph at an altitude of approximately 150 feet, counting nests along a strip estimated to be 350 feet wide. Each transect mile thus represents approximately 42.4 acres of habitat surveyed. One observer navigates and records data, while the other counts nests. (See map 2003-04-209.pdf for transect locations.)

The study area has been classified into these marsh types: fresh, intermediate, and brackish. Salt marsh is excluded from the survey, as it is not considered nesting habitat.

### Data Column Descriptors:

*Parish:* Reports the parish in which the nest was sighted. In some entries, Plaquemines Parish is identified as West Plaquemines Parish. Since the entire Davis Pond study area is west of the Mississippi River, any nests identified in Plaquemines Parish may be assumed to be in West Plaquemines Parish. Some entries identify locations other than parishes: “SWMA” refers to Salvador Wildlife Management Area in St. Charles Parish, “Timkin” refers to Timken Wildlife Management Area in St. Charles Parish, and JLNHP refers to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park in Jefferson Parish.

*Transect:* These transects are shown in map 2003-04-209.pdf. The table below gives the longitudes.

Transect Number	Longitude
27	90° 32' 30"
27A	90° 28' 45"
27B	90° 26' 52"
27C	90° 30' 37"
28A	90° 21' 15"
28B	90° 19' 22"
28C	90° 23' 07"
29	90° 17' 30"
29A	90° 13' 45"
29B	90° 11' 52"
29C	90° 15' 37"
30	90° 10' 00"
30A	90° 06' 15"
30B	90° 04' 22"
30C	90° 08' 07"
31	90° 02' 30"
31A	89° 58' 45"

31C	90° 00' 36"
32	89° 55' 00"
32A	89° 51' 15"
32C	89° 53' 07"
33	89° 46' 24"
33C	89° 44' 30"

*Marsh Type:* Reports the marsh type as fresh, intermediate, or brackish. Early data sets for the neighboring Caernarvon study area distinguished between brackish marsh with salinity above and below ten parts per thousand. These data do not.

*Latitude:* Coordinate of nest site in decimal degrees.

*Longitude:* Coordinate of nest site in decimal degrees.

*Year:* Since the transects are flown only once in a year, mainly in June, the early data (pre-2003) do not report the day and month.

*Date:* Beginning in 2003, LDWF reports the date of the survey.

*Waypoint:* LDWF assigns a unique identifier to each nest site. This label is specific to the year of the survey, that is, Waypoint 6 in 2004 is not necessarily the same as Waypoint 6 in the 2005 survey.